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E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [RS](#)  
SUBJECT: AUSTRALIA GROUP: RUSSIA SEEKS US SUPPORT FOR ITS  
CANDIDACY AT NEXT PLENARY

¶1. (SBU) Following is the text of a Russian non-paper FM  
Lavrov passed to the Secretary on the margins of recent 2  
plus 2 talks. English text below is as presented by the GOR.

¶2. (SBU) Begin text:

Pursuant to the instructions of the President of the Russian  
Federation, we have been working on Russia's admission to the  
Australia Group (AG) - an export control regime on  
CBW-related items - the only multilateral non-proliferation  
and export control mechanism to which Russia is not yet a  
party.

Our primary motive is to make utmost possible contribution  
towards strengthening international counter-proliferation  
efforts aimed at preventing spread of WMD, i.a. from falling  
into hands of terrorists. The role of our two countries is  
of extreme importance.

All AG participants were informed of our intention. Nobody  
except the US expressed disagreements with our candidacy.  
The State Department has compiled a lengthy list of  
preconditions not related to membership criteria in any way.

We have already provided extensive responses to questions on  
how the Russian export control system on dual-use biological  
and chemical items functions. If there is a need, we stand  
ready to continue experts dialogue on this issue, e.g., on  
the margins of AG plenary in Paris next July. And, as far as  
we know, only the US is against.

We feel that those who have raised the above-mentioned  
questions still live in the past and regard Russia as a main  
object for containment. It's difficult to understand how  
such approach may be consistent with the spirit of strategic  
partnership between our nations. How may it contribute to  
practical goals on preventing WMD-proliferation and  
counter-terrorism as set out by our Presidents?

It's not clear in whose interest it is to keep Russia - a  
leading producer of chemical and biological goods - out of  
the AG, discouraging us from working our collective measures  
aimed at preventing the spread of hazardous chemical and  
biological technologies.

This makes uncertain prospects for harmonizing joint efforts  
aimed at implementing UNSCR 1540 provisions, promoting PSI  
objectives and mutually beneficial cooperation on  
proliferation issues within the G8 framework. Keeping such  
an "irritator" in the US-Russian relations is not in our  
common interests.

The time is high to make a decision to demonstrate the  
willingness of our two countries to join in efforts on

non-proliferation and countering chemical and bio-terrorism.  
We need to stop running high on problems of the past. As  
regards the Russian side, we stand ready for constructive  
cooperation.

We urge you to consider the Russian interest in AG membership  
once again. We hope that the US will support our candidacy  
at the AG next plenary.

13. (U) End Text Russian non-paper.  
BURNS